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SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

STATE FOR VCI/CCA, EUR/RPM
NSC FOR NILSSON, HAYDEN
JCS FOR J5 NORWOOD, COL SMITH
OSD FOR ISA (KEHL, SCHWARTZ, ALBERQUE)

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: KCFE OSCE PARM PREL

SUBJECT: OPEN SKIES: OCTOBER 19 PLENARY - 2ND REVIEW
CONFERENCE PLANNING UNDERWAY

¶11. (SBU) Summary: On October 6 and 19, the Open Skies Consultative Commission (OSCC) held an extended plenary meeting. The October 19 session included two Review Conference preparation briefings on OSCE second dimension environmental issues. The OSCC also adopted the Annual Quota Distribution Decision for 2010. The October 6 meeting adopted an update to the 2009 quota Decision to allow the U.S. to share an observation flight with Romania over Russia the week of October 12. After the plenary, the first meeting of the newly formed Informal Working Group on Planning the Review Conference (IWGPRC) was held to begin discussion of the agenda and Final Document for the June 2010 meeting.

¶12. (SBU) The Informal Working Group on Sensors (IWGS) also held a workshop the first week of October on visual analysis methods for digital camera certification. The IWGS will meet again during the week of December 7-11. On October 8, OSCC States met to discuss the distribution of active quotas for ¶2010. As requested, the U.S. received 14 active quotas over Russia, seven of which will be shared with partners. U.S. reps also chaired the quarterly calendar de-confliction session for States with quotas over Russia and Ukraine. The next two plenaries will be held on November 23 and December ¶14. All meetings went smoothly with a spirit of cooperation. End Summary.

REVCON planning

¶13. (SBU) At the 19 October OSCC Plenary, States agreed to add a new plenary agenda item on Preparations for the Second Review Conference. As Chair of the REVCON, we are conducting outreach activities with relevant parts of the OSCE Secretariat to ensure that other elements dealing with crossover security issues are aware of the benefits of Open Skies. This approach is intended to support the OSCE concept of comprehensive security. Under this agenda item, the U.S. introduced two guest speakers to discuss current OSCE issues related to climate change and environmental projects.

¶14. (SBU) USDel (Neighbour) highlighted three goals in bringing the briefings to the OSCC:
--to promote potential synergy between a variety of OSCE crossover security issues and the Open Skies Treaty;
--to foster discussion to determine if Open Skies can make a contribution toward addressing environmental issues, including security issues related to climate change; and
--to enhance the functionality of the Treaty itself to better serve the security concerns of its members.

¶ 15. (SBU) Romanian Ambassador Feruta provided comments on the October 5-6 seminar on "Security Implications of Climate Change." Documents from this seminar are available on the OSCE web site at:

www.osce.org/conferences/eea_2009_climate.html. The Ambassador said the outcome of the seminar exceeded their expectations, and he believes the OSCE has a role to play in the future. He said the seminar was a good opportunity to show the potential of the Treaty and was a concrete way to share information about Open Skies with environmental experts outside the Treaty. He noted that Open Skies has served us well to date, and welcomed this first step toward further discussions on this approach.

¶ 16. (SBU) Mr. Slivanovic, Co-ordinator for the OSCE Office of Economic and Environmental Activities provided a summary of current environmental projects undertaken by the OSCE that could benefit from Open Skies imagery products. OCEEA is also interested in security aspects of critical infrastructure protection and energy security. He noted that security implications of climate change could be a "threat multiplier" in some cases. He made three points about the relationship between environmental issues and security: 1) sometimes environmental issues can be the cause for conflict; 2) when a conflict occurs, so will damage to the environment; and 3) after a conflict takes place, environmental projects are one of the ways the two sides can cooperate together to move forward. The OCEEA remains interested in a Ministerial Decision that provides a mandate for further work in this area, previously blocked by one delegation (Russia).

REVCN Planning Group Convenes

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¶ 17. (SBU) After the Plenary, the U.S. chaired the first meeting of the newly formed Informal Working Group on Planning the Review Conference (IWGPRC). The U.S. requested that all delegations review the prior REVCON agenda and Chairman's Statement, with a view to determining preferences for the 2010 conference. Delegations agreed that it would be important to have a Final Document or Declaration recording the results of the REVCON. USDel recommended States consider a transition plan to address sensors and aircraft.

¶ 18. (SBU) Financing future Treaty operations seems to be the most common shared challenge facing States Parties. Some wondered if an increased environmental focus would help or hinder future financing. Several delegations noted that the environmental subject is not new to Open Skies, and that it was discussed at the last REVCON. Some also questioned whether increased emphasis on environmental use of Open Skies assets would detract from the primary mission of the Treaty) arms control and CSBMs. Others urged continued focus on the transition to digital sensors and new platforms. Luxembourg summed up the preliminary discussion by posing the question: "does climate change need Open Skies) or does Open Skies need climate change?" USDel asked States to do some homework on these subjects in preparation for the next IWGPRC to be held on 14 December.

IWGS Workshop Studies Target Data

¶ 19. (SBU) From 1-7 October, the Informal Working Group on Sensors (IWGS) held a Visual Analysis Workshop to study the procedures for certification of digital sensors (OSCC.SEN/4/09). During the workshop, the group tested all four proposed visual analysis "reading rules" use to determine the resolution of digital sensors from test imagery.

¶ 10. (SBU) The objective of the workshop was to exercise provisions of Revision One to Decision Fourteen - the Video Digital Sensor Decision with the four proposed "reading rules" and gather enough statistical information to help answer outstanding issues within this decision. In addition to choosing an agreed "reading rule" for the draft decision, two other significant issues remain open: 1) the number of data points required in the pre-certification data package and 2) the design of the resolution target used for baseline sensor performance. Currently, these items are all interlinked.

¶11. (SBU) The workshop was successful. The results (including statistical data on all four visual analysis reading rules) have been posted to the IWGS Folder on the OSCE website. In order to move forward on several of the digital imagery questions, delegates discussed the merits of establishing a standardized Open Skies visual resolution target (i.e., a detailed target requirement). Both the United States and Russia currently use targets with 3-bar bar groups. Several nations use targets with 2-bar bar groups. IWGS members generally agree that the target type (2-bar vs. 3-bar) influences the Hmin value calculated at certification.

In addition, the U.S. and Russia agreed that the use of a common target for use by all States Parties for pre-certification data collection and certification events would provide the most reliable, consistent, and cost-effective results for all Parties.

¶12. (SBU) Comment: USDel understands that moving forward on the digital sensor decision remains a key policy priority. The IWGS Chair has stated that a "common target" would simplify Revision One to Decision 14. In order to prepare for the December IWGS meeting, recommend consideration be given toward advancing proposals for establishing a Standard Target (a three-bar design) at a European location (to be determined) for use by all States parties. End Comment.

Annual Quota Distribution for 2010 Agreed Quickly

¶13. (SBU) On October 8, States Parties met to negotiate the annual distribution of active quotas. The U.S. received the 15 quotas requested (14 over Russia/Belarus and 1 over Ukraine). The U.S. will share 7 of its flights over Russia with the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Romania, the UK, and Turkey, and the flight over Ukraine with Canada. Russia may conduct 42 active quota flights, and is subject to

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receive 39 flights. The OSCC adopted the results of the quota meeting on October 19 (OSCC.DEC/8/09). U.S. reps (DTRA) also held a successful de-confliction meeting among States with quotas over Russia and Ukraine to determine the quarterly and weekly calendar for 2010.

¶14. (SBU) Several States Parties reduced their quota bids or did not bid at all this year. All cited economic difficulties with funding flights in 2010. Bulgaria was the most striking case - although it originally bid on 4 quotas in September, it amended its bid just days before the meeting to one quota. Portugal, Estonia, and Lithuania did not request any quotas this year. Italy and Canada have difficulty scheduling the use of their C-130 aircraft due to higher priority activity supporting forces in Afghanistan.

¶15. (SBU) Comment: The overall number of missions requested remains high, and similar to previous years. However, several States are clearly having ongoing difficulties with maintaining their budget for Open Skies flights. USDel believes this is a trend worth watching, and encourages creative thinking on how the U.S. can propose cost-sharing arrangements that keep all partners actively engaged in the Treaty. This is clearly a topic that is likely to appear on the REVCON agenda. End comment.

Observation Flight Success Stories

¶16. (SBU) During the plenary, the UK highlighted the recent success of the mission conducted by the UK and Russia over Georgia from 28 September) 2 October. This was the second flight in a pair of flights arranged by the UK to foster improved relations between Russia and Georgia. The UK reported on the first mission conducted by the UK and Georgia over Russia in September. The UK included a reference to a comment on the UK Foreign Secretary's blog on 8 October, applauding the package of joint missions. Such flights show that progress is possible during difficult times. The UK looks forward to continuing this package of flights in 2010 in accordance with the quota distribution Decision adopted today.

¶17. (SBU) Denmark also reported positively on its first ever Open Skies flight over Russia. Hungary reported on a training flight conducted with Germany over the territory of Montenegro. The training and VIP flights were conducted on the Hungarian aircraft over two days, and were done according

to Treaty procedures. The imagery was processed in Hungary.
Hungary believes Montenegro is favorably disposed to apply
for OSCC membership.

Fuller